

# *Memorandum for the Record*

9 January 2003

**Subject: Delivery Team Meetings for the Reservoir Operations Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Study – Upper Mississippi River Headwater Reservoirs Project**

1. On 8 January 2003, the ROPE Delivery Team met in the Executive Conference Room of the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers office beginning at 10:15 a.m. An invitation had been provided to all ROPE Delivery Team members, and attendance to the meeting included Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Audubon, and Corps District field and in-house functional representatives (see enclosure 1 for a list of attendees).

2. The focus of the meeting was to update the Delivery Team on the ongoing study efforts and status and to plan the continued mobilization of the Task Forces and Lake/River Citizen Groups. The agenda for the meeting is attached (enclosure 2). Issues and noteworthy items of discussion at the meeting follow.

- The potential effects of climatic changes were discussed, and it was agreed that additional efforts to model trends in climate would be important, as compared to just using historical records. This is especially an issue in view of the recent global warming concerns and the potential effects to the study area.
- There was discussion regarding the need to define limits on alternatives up front. The desire to limit/narrow the scope was expressed at a recent Environmental Task Force meeting and was desired by some Delivery Team members. The group expressed consensus that the authorized project does set limits on the extent of changes it is possible to recommend through this ROPE study (e.g., the ranges of pool elevations established by Congress limit alternatives). And, those constraints that limit alternatives need to be better defined and articulated to the Task Forces and Stakeholders. However, there was also discussion regarding doing systemwide types of evaluations (including the Lake Bemidji chain and possible increased bays in some of the existing dams) that go beyond a strict and narrow interpretation of what the ROPE is to focus on. For some of these big picture work items, the ROPE still has a role to keep those opportunity spin-offs in mind and to take the evaluations of such opportunities to the point of making recommendations for further study and action by others or in other studies (e.g., ROPE findings could include recommendations to pursue a Section 205 flood control project at Aitkin or to do a Design Deficiency Report to authorized construction of a new bay in one or more of the existing dams). Such opportunities should be looked for and looked at during this ROPE.

- Brainstorming efforts by the Delivery Team are under way to better define the hydraulic models, environmental models, matrix evaluation procedures, and associated automated planning tools that should be used to complete this ROPE. These efforts need to be completed and documented prior to our next series of meetings with Task Force and Citizen Groups. The documentation on these procedures is scheduled to be completed within the next 5 to 6 weeks.
- Champions of the various Task Forces and Citizen Groups were asked to work through Marilyn Kruchten to get Memos for the Record, meeting dates, and education information relevant to their function posted on the ROPE web pages. Marilyn will be the ROPE point of contact with Holly Zillmer (our webmaster).
- The current Corps ROPE study funding this fiscal year is \$450,000, and an additional \$80,000 is the anticipated Forest Service funding this fiscal year. However, because of the continuing resolution funding and the potential for re-prioritization of ROPE funding to homeland security in future budgets, there is considerable uncertainty in the funding available for the ROPE this year and in fiscal year 2004. The ROPE funding levels will be monitored closely, and if ROPE funding is delayed, we will make that information available. At this time, though, we are assuming full funding and proceeding with all the study efforts.
- After this Delivery Team meeting, a breakout session was conducted from noon to 1 p.m. to present information about our current operating plans and to answer related questions. Kenton Spading (Corps of Engineers water control representative) was the presenter. Champions need to use a similar approach in future Delivery Team breakout sessions to sensitize the team to the nuances associated with the various Task Forces. Another breakout session to discuss finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding with the Forest Service was held from 1 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

3. This meeting was very constructive. Delivery Team member efforts are needed within the next few weeks to help refine and define the planning and analysis models and associated timeline for the ROPE formulation. Our next team meeting is likely to be in approximately 6 weeks.

/ s /

Ed McNally  
Project Manager

Enclosures:  
Meeting Roster  
Agenda

Copy furnished:  
All Meeting Participants and Delivery Team Members (see roster listing). Also sent to Elisse Avnne, Mille Lacs Band; Gerald White, Leech Lake Band; and Jane VanHunnik, Mississippi Headwaters Board.

**Subject:** Project Delivery Team – 8<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2003 – Executive Conference Room  
**RE:** Upper Mississippi River Headwaters ROPE Studies

## Sign-In Roster

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Email and/or Telephone</u>
1.	Jodi Kormanik	USACE	290-5646
2.	BRAD JOHNSON	COE	(651) 290-5250
3.	Steve Clark	COE	(651) 290-5278
4.	Jim Noren	COE	651 290 5626
5.	Rick Carlson	COE	651-290-5259
6.	JOHN O'LEARY	COP	218 327-4027
7.	Franklin Star	COE	651-290-5328
8.	John Steward	DNR	218/547-1770
9.	Bruce Wilson	MPCA	651 282 2619
10.	Brenda Haller-Glenn	USFS	218/-335-8651
11.	Edward L. McVally	COE	(651) 290-5387
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**Subject: Project Delivery Team – January 8, 2003 – Executive Conference Room**  
**RE: Upper Mississippi River Headwaters ROPE Studies**

## **A G E N D A**

**Start at 10:15 a.m.**

### **Introductions and Study Status**

Summary of the inventories and modeling planned or under way

- Tribal
- Environmental
- Economics (Flood Control, Recreation, Hydropower, other)
- H&H
- Groundwater Impacts Evaluations via USGS
- Other

### **Change in plan formulation model and sequencing of work methods**

- Matrix Evaluation approach is being refined; Review findings of our brainstorming sessions with Dr. Bartell and Dr. Gutreuter, Dan Wilcox, and HEC team.
- Discussion on Chronology of Formulation Models and Methods (timeline for):
  - Establishing annual hydrographs for each lake and river reach (existing operation, pre-project conditions, targets for various purposes)
  - Prescriptive Reservoir Model (PRM)
  - RES SIM and/or HEC-5
  - HEC RAS
  - HEC-Ecosystem Functions Model and habitat optimization methods
  - Matrix Evaluations Comparisons
  - Flood damages models and optimization of other economic factors
  - Identification of Tribal Interests
  - Recreation/Tourism models/evaluations
  - Hydropower benefits/losses models

### **Logistical Items for Team Discussion**

- Strategy for Task Forces to input into the web site (summary of objectives and opportunities and constraints from each perspective) - To be used later in the text of the document and for education purposes. Also, to help champion of each Task Force to informally brief the Delivery Team (like Kenton is today).
- Recent DNR Letter Content - Defining Systemwide Plan (Net optimizations vs. Balanced Benefits and Impacts), etc.
- Schedule for upcoming events (to post – Use Marilyn Kruchten and me as POC's)
- Need to start setting constraints and/or objectives (e.g., no induced flood damages without compensation (for 100-year floodplains), set low flow releases, flow ramping rate restrictions, must stay within authorized operation bands, no net adverse effects to important Tribal resources/interests, Others.)

### **Overview and Status of the ROPE**

#### **Evolving Funding Situation**

- Current FY03 funding of \$500k + (\$530k with Forest Service contributions) via Continuing Resolution. More funding could be likely in 4th Qtr. Memorandum of Understanding still being finalized.
- However, yesterday we received prel. O&M FY04 info that indicates our normal District O&M will be cut by \$16 million and homeland security push funds of \$6 million would be added (net \$10 million loss in FY04). This could have significant impacts this FY too because to construct homeland security in FY04 we need to reprioritize FY03 funding and ROPE could get cut.

### **Upcoming Action Items of Work for Delivery Team and Champions**

- Discussion on how to prepare for the next series of Task Force and Citizen Group Meetings.
- Implications of Budget on mobilization!?

**Close Basic Delivery Team Meeting = NLT 11:45 a.m.**

Break until 12:05 p.m. and then reconvene for Kenton Spading presentation on existing operations.

At 1 p.m., break for Forest Service meeting with our District Office of Counsel regarding Memorandum of Understanding.